

Coastal Carolina University  
**CCU Digital Commons**

---

Honors Theses

Honors College and Center for Interdisciplinary  
Studies

---

Fall 12-17-2019

## Small Worlds: A Collection of Creative Nonfiction on Relationships and Our Connections

Nicole H. Conner  
*Coastal Carolina University*, [nhconner@coastal.edu](mailto:nhconner@coastal.edu)

Colin Burch  
*Coastal Carolina University*, [cburch1@coastal.edu](mailto:cburch1@coastal.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.coastal.edu/honors-theses>



Part of the [Fine Arts Commons](#), and the [Nonfiction Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Conner, Nicole H. and Burch, Colin, "Small Worlds: A Collection of Creative Nonfiction on Relationships and Our Connections" (2019). *Honors Theses*. 347.  
<https://digitalcommons.coastal.edu/honors-theses/347>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Honors College and Center for Interdisciplinary Studies at CCU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Honors Theses by an authorized administrator of CCU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [commons@coastal.edu](mailto:commons@coastal.edu).



## HONORS THESIS RELEASE FORM

I hereby give the HTC Honors College permission to release the contents of my Honors thesis online in the Coastal Carolina University Digital Commons. Additionally, I give permission for the contents of my thesis to be published in part or in full in CCU publications and on the CCU website.

Student Name (please print clearly)

Date

Signature

---

Phone number to reach you with publication questions

**Small Worlds: A Collection of Creative Nonfiction  
on Relationships and Our Connections**

By

Nicole Conner

English

---

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts  
In the HTC Honors College at  
Coastal Carolina University

Fall 2019

---

Louis E. Keiner  
Director of Honors  
HTC Honors College

Colin Burch  
Senior Lecturer  
Department of English  
Edwards College of Humanities  
and Fine Arts

## Reflection

### *Small Worlds: A Collection of Creative Nonfiction on Relationships and Our*

*Connections* is a combined portfolio of five different nonfiction pieces I've contributed over my time at Coastal Carolina University. Originally, the works were designed to center around a multitude of relationships: my romantic relationships, family relationships, and relationship with myself and the world around me. However, overtime, the portfolio developed into a collection of pieces centering around the different connections leading to one particular romantic relationship in my life, the heartbreak of it, and the finality of acceptance.

Not only was it my own experiences that caused this shift in perspective, but also the published pieces I read while compiling my portfolio. One particular author who inspired several works in this portfolio was Hanif Abdurraqib. The first essay in my portfolio, "Small Worlds", was heavily inspired by Abdurraqib's "Schoolboy Q Wants White People to Say the Word." It was through reading this I learned to use a popular and important musical figure in order to weave together the ideas of family, love, and drugs. "Small Worlds" uses my family's hometown of Pittsburgh's very own local legend Mac Miller to explain my own ideas of love and loss. Miller's own drugs habits which ultimately led to his death were another element I wanted to include in order to tell my own story with drug use and how it was woven into my very first love story.

Abdurraqib's "The Night Prince Walked on Water" also heavily inspired the final piece in my portfolio, "Tyler, the Creator is a Human Being and So Am I." Abdurraqib explains his own experience watching Prince's performance at the halftime of Super Bowl XLI while also weaving in his own insights of the musician. I used this format to explain the experience of going to see a performer that was heavily connected to my first love, experiencing it alone, and the

acceptance of that idea. Throughout the piece, I use the present day concert as a format for how I dive into the past, relating it back to the most significant songs.

“I Contain Multitudes” is an essay that explains the relationships of my life, who I am, my body, and, ultimately, what I chose to put on my body because of it. It’s a deep dive into my relationship with myself and the different connections that lead me to a tattoo parlor where I received my first tattoo. “Coins on the Shelf” is my story of finding love, falling in love, and falling out of love. However, the essay is told using material elements and connections, such as coins, bracelets, and rubber bands, all of which played a major role in my first relationships. Finally, “Theater Eleven” is an essay on one particular theater at my first movie theater job. It’s through this theater I explain the story of how it grew to be of importance to me and came to be a significant location in my very first relationship. All of these pieces are connected in their own way, but, more importantly, they depict the connections that existed in one particular romantic relationship of mine and where they’ve lead me.